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General and complete disarmament: humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons

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Humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 70/48 of 7 December 2015,

Ever mindful of the unacceptable harm that victims of nuclear weapon explosions and nuclear testing have experienced, and recognizing that the rights and needs of victims have not yet been adequately addressed,

Understanding that the immediate, medium-term and long-term consequences of a nuclear weapon explosion would be significantly graver than was understood in the past and would not be constrained by national borders but have regional or even global effects, potentially threatening the survival of humanity,

Recognizing the complexity of and relationship between these consequences for, inter alia, health, the environment, infrastructure, food security, climate, development, social cohesion, displacement and the global economy, which would be systemic and potentially irreversible,

Aware that the risk of a nuclear weapon explosion is significantly greater than previously assumed and is indeed increasing with increased proliferation, the lowering of the technical threshold for nuclear weapon capability, the ongoing modernization of nuclear weapon arsenals in States possessing nuclear weapons and the role that is attributed to nuclear weapons in the nuclear doctrines of such States,

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Cognizant that the risk of the use of nuclear weapons, with its unacceptable consequences, can be avoided only when all nuclear weapons have been eliminated,

Emphasizing that the consequences of a nuclear weapon explosion and the risks associated with nuclear weapons concern the security of all humanity and that all States share the responsibility to prevent any use of nuclear weapons,

Emphasizing also that the scope of the consequences of a nuclear weapon explosion and the associated risks raise profound moral and ethical questions that go beyond debates about the legality of nuclear weapons,

Mindful that no national or international capacity exists that would adequately respond to the human suffering and humanitarian harm that would result from a nuclear weapon explosion in a populated area, and that such capacity most likely will never exist,

Affirming that it is in the interest of the very survival of humanity that nuclear weapons are never used again, under any circumstances,

Reiterating the crucial role that international organizations, relevant entities of the United Nations, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, elected representatives, academia and civil society play in advancing the shared objective of a nuclear-weapon-free world,

Recalling the three international conferences convened, respectively, by Norway in March 2013, Mexico in February 2014 and Austria in December 2014 on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, and the compelling evidence presented at these conferences,

Welcoming the fact that 127 States have drawn inescapable conclusions from the evidence on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and, consequently, supported or endorsed the Humanitarian Pledge,[1]

1. *Stresses* the importance of having fact-based discussions and presenting findings and compelling evidence on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons in all relevant forums and within the United Nations framework, as they should be at the centre of all deliberations and the implementation of obligations and commitments with regard to nuclear disarmament;

2. *Appeals* to all States to follow the imperative of human security for all and to promote the protection of civilians against risks stemming from nuclear weapons;

3. *Urges* all States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons[2] to renew their commitment to the urgent and full implementation of their existing obligations under article VI, and calls upon all States to identify and pursue effective measures to fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons and to cooperate with all stakeholders to achieve this goal;

4. *Calls upon* all States to pursue an additional legal instrument or instruments with urgency and to support international efforts to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons;

[1] See CD/2039 and www.hinw14vienna.at.

[2] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 729, No. 10485.

5. *Recalls* that all such efforts are aimed at contributing to the full implementation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons;

6. *Requests* all States possessing nuclear weapons, pending the total elimination of their nuclear weapon arsenals, to take concrete interim measures to reduce the risk of nuclear weapon detonations, including by reducing the operational status of nuclear weapons and moving nuclear weapons away from deployment and into storage, diminishing the role of nuclear weapons in military doctrines and rapidly reducing all types of nuclear weapons;

7. *Calls upon* all relevant stakeholders, States, international organizations, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, parliamentarians and civil society to cooperate in efforts to stigmatize, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons in the light of their unacceptable humanitarian consequences and associated risks;

8. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-second session, under the item entitled "General and complete disarmament", the sub-item entitled "Humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons".